***Memoirs of Milo R. Schultz***

***Foreword***

The Memoirs of Milo R. Schultz was written over several years. He wrote them in his own hand on 5” x 8” yellow lined paper. He numbered each page. Therefore, the reader will note that each section has a page number.

I typed his memoirs in the order that he wrote and endeavored not to edit or change the wording. I wanted to keep his memoirs in his own voice.

I’m sure the reader will forgive any grammatical errors, misspelled, or missing words for this was written from his heart as a gift to his family.

***Pages regarding WWII.***

Howie and I spent the rest of the fall working with Dad. On weekends I along with Jack Pohl, Bill Hall Dick Zdyb or Tom Wrobleski bowled at Michigan City Recreation on E. Michigan Blvd. In fact, we were bowling on December 7, 1941 when we got word about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. With all the uncertain futures facing us fellows, I was determined to start college life. When Howie’s football team visited Purdue in 1939 to watch the Boilermakers play Michigan State, I went along and fell in love with the campus. I was determined to go to college despite the war, and had saved enough money for about one years price of education.

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Dad and Mom drove me down to Purdue in beautiful fall of 1942 in their new Packard. I was settled in a small dormitory room in south Cary Hall of the Cary quadrangle. My roommate was George Read and fellow graduate at Elston High School. I never asked him whey he waited a year to go to college as I had. He was intelligent so we got along well. We had double bunks in the room with George taking the upper. Another freshman from Michigan City was Keith Drehmel who had graduated with Howie the year before. Keith was a great guy then and after the war when I got to know him better. All freshman were required to be in the ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Comman) which was field artillery oriented. The program changed gun sizes from French 75 mm (World War I) to 105 mm howitzers which turned out to be the standard field artillery piece of

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World War II. There was a crew of three on each gun and I was the loader, ramming the shell into the breech. A few years ago, there was a picture in the Purdue newspaper that depicted a ROTC gun crew with a student ramming a shell into the gun. The picture was taken from behind so one could not identify the loader, except my oldest boy Randy, a Purdue alumnus.

I enjoyed campus life going to football and basketball games. There were the crazy guys who were always good for a laugh. All my grades were just average because it was hard to get back into the study routine with the ever present distractions. At evening meal we had to wear a suit coat and tie in the dining hall. I sent my laundry home in a suitcase and would get it back cleaned

and pressed by Mom in a few days. At the end of the first semester all students were getting on edge about the war and whether they would be called-up. Since I took my first airplane ride at age nine and built a lot model airplanes I always wanted to be a pilot. I went into Lafayette and took the Air Corps exam after George took his. While George passed the written test (138 out of 150) he failed the next II. (out of sequence here nb.)

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Physical. I took the test days later and had 118 out of 150 on the written test. I passed the physical. Sworn in Nov. 23, 1942. Figuring I would be called up pretty soon I quite Purdue and went home. George stayed in school, enlisted in the Navy V12 program and graduated with a free education and commission. What a twist of fate.

Good friend and neighbor Phyllis Kuhn was attending Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida a suburb of Orlando. Her mother was with her in an apartment. Dad and Mom decided it would be good for Howie and me to get some kind of a vacation before we went into service. Roger stayed with Aunt Ellen. We packed up the Packard and headed south with Phyllis’s dad Phil. He had negotiated a rental of a two story house across the lake from Rollins College for $100 for the month of January, 1943. I wonder what that house would rent for today.

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It took us two and half days to get there by way of old US 41 to Nashville, Valdosta, and Orlando. That one month in Winter Park was one of the best times in my life. Dad, Phil, Howie and I fished Lake Apopka and caught bass, fished Indian River near Canaveral and caught trout, and caught nothing in the St. John’s river and Tampa Bay. I remember we had orange and banana trees in the back yard. While I was there I studied a main-in course on basic aeronautics which helped somewhat later on.

While heading home, we ran into a snowstorm in Griffin, GA sixty miles south of Atlanta. They didn’t have snowplows down there, only road graders, so we were lucky to get a motel room for the night. Dad drove all the way some 900 miles, and arrived in Michigan City at 2AM the next morning. I received my notice to report to Fort Hayes, in Columbus, Ohio sometime in March 1943. Dad and Mom took me to the South Shore station in town where I kissed Mom and even kissed my Dad good-bye. The train to Columbus passed through LaCrosse on the New York Central. As we passed through, I wondered with nostalgia

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While at Purdue University during the fall term of 1942, I took the Air Corp cadet examination and passed with a good score. I was called up in March of 1943 and took the train to Columbus, Oho where I was sworn in. We were all college kids and took the long train ride to the classification center at San Antonio, Texas. Since I didn’t pass the depth perception test and was good at math, I was selected to go to navigation school. Was sent to preflight school at Ellington Field in Houston for a few weeks and then arrived at navigation school at San Marcos, Texas in June 1943. Graduated October 1943 and commissioned as a second Lieutenant.

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Reported to Pyote, Texas and joined Donald Johnston’s B-17 crew. Time there was spent coming together as a team. We flew short navigational and gunnery flights. At ground school I liked to go to a building that had a celestial ceiling where I could practice celestial navigation. I particularly liked to learn to use the Norden bombsight just in case I had to use it in combat. From Pyote, we

moved on to Dyersburg, Tennessee where Don Johnston replaced on crew member. This came about when two B-17s collided in mid-air. There was just 2 or 3 crew members that survived and one joined our crew. He had been an army master sergeant and later was the only flying master sergeant in the 8th Air Force. All B-17s at this base were old models or returned from overseas.

So many problems with maintenance arose. One day we got into three planes before we took off.

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how many times I had come by on the way to and from Purdue. I arrived a Fort Hayes early in the morning along with hundreds of other college young men. We were from every small and big college and university in the Midwest. I believe we were sworn into to Air Corps at this time, but not sure. We were loaded into thirteen old train coaches the next day and headed for San Antonio, Texas, all the while still in our civilian clothes. It took us two and a half days to get to San Antonio because we were put on sidings several times in order to let high priority freight trains to pass.

After days on a smokey train we arrived unshaven, unwashed, and in dirty clothes. I fantasized how soon I would be flying. How wrong I was. We were herded off to a typical World War II two story barracks building. We were at the Air Corps classification center, not a airfield. In a matter of days we were issued Army clothes; endured several shots, physical exams, intelligent tests and psychiatry exams. The one test I seemed good at was the depth perception test where you adjust tow markers at a distance of 15 to 20 feet, so that they would be exactly opposite each other. This test is very important for pilot training. I did extremely well in all tests except the depth perception so they acted in the Army way; they chose me for navigational training. I didn’t care what training I would be in as long as it was flying. One incident in training was when we were marched to a building where we were shown all the communicable diseases we could get. The major in charge was a former actor in westerns who played the stuttering sidekick. He said that San Antonio had one of the highest venereal disease rates in the country.

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Many idle hours were spent or details like pickup rocks and cigarette butts. After drilling and marching between classification tests we were shipped to preflight school at Ellington Field at Houston. At preflight, I tasted frozen desserts for the first time along with the other excellent food. Air Corps in Texas had a passion for iced tea which I never got a liking for. We had some classes to attend and a lot of physical training where we had to run the mile in five minutes. Since I had ROTC at Purdue the officer in charge placed me at the head of our barracks marching duties. It consisted mostly of short order drills and roll calls. As a unit of 30 to 40 cadets it was pretty tough some times to keep them in line. Good marching paid off on Saturday mornings when we had “March On” at the parade ground before the colonel. The best marching unit or

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flight among two hundred cadets got to catch the first bus to Houston to infiltrate the feminine population. Houston was great city in those days with all their oil barons. In fact, all of Texas was great to servicemen. If you wanted to go somewhere on pass, all you had to do was to get on the highway and hitchhike where somebody would always give you a ride.

Early on e morning in June 1943, our trainload of some 230 cadets, still imbued with that Ellington Field eagerness, peered with sleepy eyes through the dusty coach windows and exclaimed, “By golly its San Marcos!” Our 43-15 class had arrived for advanced navigation training. San Marcos’ 43-9 class had just graduated and received their wings. One of the many tragedies of the war was Larry Ross of that first graduating class at San Marcos. He was killed on June 22, 1944 on a mission to Wizernes, France to bomb a “No Ball” V-weapon site in the Pas de Calais area. After Larry’s B-17 dropped its bombs on target, the plane received

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direct flak hits on the Nos. 1 and 2 engines. The crew was forced to bail out over the English Channel. Larry’s body was recovered by a English destroyer. Word went out he was found floating with the parachute open. Larry slept on the cot next to me and always kidded that he would someday bury me at Madingly, the Eight Air Force cemetery. Instead, he was buried there. How ironic!

Recalling the arrival at San Marcos, no time was wasted as the instructors make it clear that the next seventeen weeks would be “rough-plenty rough”. To make this impression indelible, classes were to be in session all day Saturday and Sunday for a week or two. Also, making an impression upon arrival, the fact was that one of our training planes had crashed at Monroe, Louisianan the previous night and the flag was a half staff.

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Finally, three weeks anticipation ended with orientation flight. The planes we flew in were twin engine, twin rudder trainers made by . We sometimes flew in twin engine Locheeds which were a little larger. Each plane consisted of three cadets and one pilot. Each flight was about 200 to 250 miles long. One cadet would direct the pilot with dead reckoning, or DR, one cadet would plot the course by using the radio compass: and one cadet would follow the course by pilotage which consisted of looking out the window and checking land markers on the map. We flew at altitudes of 3 to 5 thousand feet so air sickness became a factor many times. The summertime updrafts of air created bountiful clouds but also bumpy air. The compass cover became a friend to me and many other cadets. I couldn’t wait to be in a bomber that flies over all that rough air. After several weeks of ground school and DR flights, the bygones, the celestial missions loomed ahead. Our echelon would go outside the classroom on beautiful starry nights and plot fixes with our sextants.

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Because the heavens move in rotation to the earth I became acquainted with approximately fifty stars and their constellations including the north star. With all the training come pleasurable times for us cadets. We used to hitchhike to New Braunfels and swim in their community pool. My young brother Roger and wife Norma moved there in and built many new homes. His son, Steve and wife Lois moved their after graduation from Purdue and is now a prominent land surveyor there. A couple of cadets and I went to Galveston and swam in the Gulf in front of the giant seawall that was built to protect the town from Hurricanes. On one particular occasion I found that my brother Howie was in preflight at Ellingotn Field near Houston so I got a pass and made my way (I don’t know how) to visit him. Since he wasn’t in college when he signed up, the

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Air Corps sent him to a couple of small colleges before preflight. He was classified for pilot training and later washed out of primary flight school. A big part of our stay at San Marcos Army Air Field was invested in P.T. (physical training). Who was our P.T. director? None other than Lt. Duane Purois, who was the football coach at Elston High School before entering service. He was an all- American at Purdue and Howie’s coach. I ran into him again after the war at Purdue when daughter Kathy graduated in 1973. At that time he was on the graduating committee helping at the ceremony at Elliott Hall. During August of 1943, a hurricane approached the Texas coast so the order was given to fly the planes our of harm’s way. We flew to smokey St. Louis where I had the opportunity get inside a parked B-17.

Weeks passed and interceptions, dog legs, and triangles were accomplished so dead reckoning became fairly simple; but I never had a “zero-zero” (At exact destination at exact estimated time of arrival) mission up through that period of training.

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But the big ones, the celestial missions, loomed ahead. They were to provide the real test of the sterling navigator. After weeks of shooting with all kids of sextants, plotting lines of position, and struggling through ground missions, class 43-15 was ready for its first night flight. I can still see our 1st Lt. Echelon Six Leader at briefing telling us CAVO (clear and visibility unlimited) all the way to Garden City, Kansas, some 600 miles away. As he finished he smiled and said “if you come back all right”. On our celestial flights, I believe all three of us cadets took turns shooting the stars through the astrodome but only one directed the pilot as to course and time. When our plane

neared the Canadian river in Oklahoma, we ran into a local storm. We bounced all over the sky and finally landed at Garden City. After landing, we heard that

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Other planes made emergency landings at other airports and two had crashed. That shook up the echelon pretty badly. Six cadets, Earl Ryker, Andrew Ruben, William Rowe from my barracks, and William Rowland, Leonard Vogel, and Henry Walker from next door barracks were killed along with pilot and co-pilot in each plane. Normally, there usually was one pilot in each plane, but in this instance, each plane had a co-pilot getting in his flight time. The information went out that the planes ran into thunderheads where the up and down drafts, tore the wings off. Earl Ryker slept a couple cots from me and was the son of a Lockheed Vega airplane corporation Vice President who called for an investigation of the crashes. On my last celestial missions I was lead navigator on the return trip to base. Lt. Geronimo, the toughest of the six instructors, rode along as co-pilot. I really worked hard to get two excellent star fixes and only corrected course once. The result was a zero- zero perfect mission. I think I impressed Lt. Geronimo.

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The last mission had been flown; the ground missions were over; the final exams had been passed. My qualification report gave me grades of 78 for Air Work and 71 for Ground School work. Efficiency rating was; Leadership-very satisfactory, Initiative-excellent, Attention to duty-excellent, Military Bearing-very satisfactory, and Ability to instruct-very satisfactory.

The maze into which we had wandered had become a clear straight path, and we found ourselves officers and navigators. At last, on October 12, 1943, after months of hard training, those cherished wings were given to me by Lt. Col. John N. Reynolds, Fr. To pin on. I was a full fledge 2nd Lt. as a rated navigator with serial number 0696156. After graduation I went home on a ten

day leave. There is a picture of me in my brand new officers uniform

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Along with Mom at 202 Superior St. in Michigan City, Indiana. I reported for duty Nov. 4, 1943 to the 19th Bomb Group at Pyote, Texas. It was called the rattlesnake airbase. I met and joined crew

#131, Flight A with 2nd Lt. Donal Johnston, pilot, 2nd Lt. Ralph Sudderth, bombardier, S.sgt. Kenzie

Turner, Engineer, Sgt. Charles Treece, radio operator, Frank Nestok, tail gunner, Sgt. Paul Pesetsky, ball turret operator, and Sgt. Pat Parks, waist gunner. The b-17s we flew were old model Fs that may have been in war zones. We had orientation flights were each crew member got to know his job so that when it came for combat flying we would be one cohesive unit. We had one flight where we had gunnery practice. All it mounted to was shooting at a white sheet on the west Texas desert. From the nose position, I did kick up a little dust. The base contained a

building for bombardier and navigation training exercises. I enjoyed that place a lot because it had a very high ceiling that lit up the starry heavens that moved just as if one was getting a star fix outside.

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Of course, when I used my sextant and shot different stars, I would always get the same location on the ground. It was good training and I enjoyed it very much. The building also had bombardier training equipment. It had the Norden bombsite, which I learned to use in case Ralph was incapacitated and I had to take over. One particular situation I enjoyed was interception. The bombsite was on a movable plat from about ten feet above the floor. On the floor was a toy battleship that also was movable. The problem entailed both plane and ship moving and required the plane to intercept and bomb the ship. Ralph and I went to the newly constructed officers club and after trying out several slot machines, we found a dime slot that was defective. We proceeded to empty it regularly. We went into the nearby town of Monahams

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And got a big T-bone steak for a couple of bucks. It was so tender you didn’t need a knife to cut it. The only annoying thing about Pyote was the howling coyotes at night.

On November 27, 1943, forty nine B-17 crews left Pyote Air Base, Texas and arrived November 28, at the 346th Combat Training School, Dyersburg, Tennessee for final phase training before going oversees. It was quite a train ride for 400 to 500 (49 air crews) officers and enlisted men. It was tiresome because the train had to stop on sidings to let priority trains pass. If that stop was happened to be in town, several fellows would get off and find a liquor store. Many were successful because many exteriors of cars showed signs of heavy drinking and throwup.. We

arrived and found B-17 Fs, the same model as Pyote, only in worse shape. Sometimes we would have to get into a second plane before we could take-off because of poor maintenance. Many events took place while I was at Dyersbury. 1st Lts. Heiser and Penniman were roommates and

former regular Army officers who chose to fly B-17s and have their own crews. They took off one day and proceeded

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To collide while formation flying. Most were killed but at least one survivor that I knew of was M/Sgt Abraham Barnum. He was the engineer on Lt. Penniman’s plane and was fortunate to bail- out with less than 500 ft attitude. This qualified him to be a member of the caterpillar club. Don made room for him on our crew by bumping S/Sgt Turner to waist gunner teaming with Parks.

Later on Parks got into some trouble so Don replaced him with M.J. Smith. So we finally had a required ten man combat crew. Barnum was the only M/Sgt that I knew of that had flying status in the Air Corps. We flew one gunnery practice flight along the Mississippi River where a great white sheet was spread out over the treetops. We flew one navigation al flight to Indianapolis where we buzzed Monument Circle. The most memorable training flight at

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346th Combat Crew Training School at Dyersburg Tennessee occurred when our Don Johnston’s

crew led a flight of B-17s on a simulated bombing mission of an oil refinery at Baton Rouge, Louisiana and gunnery practice on a tow target over the Gulf of Mexico. I don’t remember how many planes were in that flight but it was several. Being the lead navigator, I collected all the pre- flight data necessary for a good mission. After takeoff, I gave Don the proper compass heading for Baton Rouge but soon found that we were going to have cloud cover under us. In order to check my position, I tried to get radio fixes but soon found that they were not too reliable because of bad

equipment. We could not bomb the refinery because we couldn’t see it so we headed for the Gulf. The clouds under us disappeared when we arrived at the coast and found the plane towing the target. As we headed home, we started to lose planes due to mechanical problems. They had to land at various airports along the way. When we landed at Dyersburg, we only had a fraction of the planes that tookoff with us. Mechanical problems persisted.

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On a particular mission I was lead navigator to lead a flight to simulate a bombing of oil refineries at Baton Rouge, La and then gunnery practice on a towing target over the Gulf of Mexico. To compliment my dead reckoning, I decided to get radio fixes. The radios were so bad that my fixes were not to good. We arrived over Baton Rouge and then clouds obscured the target so we couldn’t bomb. We moved on the Gulf where it cleared up. The gunnery practice didn’t last long and headed for home. By the time we got back, there were just a planes to land; the rest were scattered all over due to mechanical problems.

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After a 30 day leave, we picked up a brand new B-17 G at Kearny, Nebraska in January 1944 and headed for England.

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I did manage to get a 3 day weekend pass to go home. I took the Illinois Central at Huls, Tennessee to 12th St. station in Chicago where I got the South Shore to Michigan City. We had our 8 day leave starting January 28, 1944 before going overseas. We picked up a brand new b-17 G at Kearney, Nebraska on February 5, 1944. We took off a day or so later for Manchester, New

Hampshire while it was still dark one morning in early February 1944. We flew the airline route so my job was not needed. I could tell we were passing over northern Indian because we could see steel miss furnace flashes on the clouds below us. By the time we reached Buffalo, NY there was light. Evidently, copilot Robert Huessler had notified his parents that we would be flying over their house outside of Buffalo because they and some servants were outside waving as we buzzed their house.

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We landed at Manchester. Our next destination was Goose Bay, Labrador. In early February, it was pretty desolate looking country we were flying over and I wondered what would happen if we had to crashland. We landed at Goose Bay on a runway that was carved out of six foot snow drifts. It was a beautiful setting in the snow and pine trees. We had to wait a day or tow for the weather to clear over the north Atlantic. When we did get the ok to take off a B-24 ahead of us had locked brakes so we had to wait for sometime. At briefing, mountains at the tip of Greenland went to 10,000 ft. so I decided to stay right of course somewhat. Also, a piece of bad luck happened when Ralph accidently broke my desk light so I rounded up a flashlight. We finally took off after an hours delay and headed for Iceland. With the late start, I had to work real hard because we were heading on an easterly direction and daylight was fast approaching. I don’t recall how many fixes I had but they did show that I was right of course as I had planned. The fixes I got were from a combination of stars, moon, and the Greenland radio. While I

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Was using my sextant, I had to keep brushing the frost off of the astrodome. After several hours of navigating and nearing Iceland, I suggested to Don to practice homing in on the Reykjavik air base because I needed some rest. I found out later that the standard quadrants were not at 90 degree right angles but at 45 degree and 135 degree angles. We flew approximately a heading of 315

degrees where I shot the sun at 12 degrees at noon. We turned and headed east at 90 degrees and finally southwest at 225 degrees. At this time, I told Don it was impossible to navigate anymore because it had become very hazy. Don told radio operator Charlie Treece to send out a distress May Day signal. We must have been close to the air base because it wasn’t long before an old P-39 came up and escorted us in. We landed with about 20 minutes of gas left. We heard rumors that there was sabotage at Goose Bay

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Like cutting radio antenna wire on planes. I don’t know if that had any effect on our plane or not, but the opportunity was there to sneak up and cut wires while we sitting ready to take off in the darkness of the night. After debriefing we were taken to a Quonset hut for the night. When I pulled between the sheets of my cot, it felt as if I was lying in water not realizing Iceland is a land of glaciers and volcanoes and the humidity is always high even through we were at the artic Circle in February. The next morning we took off for Prestwick, Scotland. It was a beautiful sunny day so I decided to use the astro compass to keep us on course. It’s a fine navigation al tool as long as the sun is shinning. As we came near the airfield at Prestwick, the Royal Navy requested we give the proper identification signal which was returned by Don. (Ask Don). I do not recall how many days we were there but I do recall one beautiful starry night on the Scottish moor and hearing the Royal Air Force starting on their nightly mission to bomb targets in Germany. The Lancaster bomber Merlin engines had that distinctive hum that was entirely different from the B-17s and B-24s.

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We left our brand new B-17-G at Prestwick never to know its life history after our departure. It had served us well. Was it shot down by a ME109 or Focke Wolf 190? Was it hit by 88mm anti-aircraft fire and explode with all ten man crew KIA? Did it have to ditch in the North Sea or English Channel? Or did it survive the war with battle scars from 30, 50, 75 missions and fly back to the United States only to be cut up and sold, for scrap in a Arizona grave yard? Under what name did it die?

We took the train to Bassingbourne. The English trains were a throwback to the 19th century. The engines were little puff-puffs and the carriages or coaches were connected by large chains instead of couplings. The carriages were entered from the side, not like ours. But the trains did start without the jerk as our passenger trains did. We arrived at Bassingbourne to be processed and

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Assigned bomb group and squadron. I don’t recall if we had an orientation flight. After days at Bassingbourne, we got on our little train and arrived at our final destination; Trapston and nearby airbase at Molesworth on . We were assigned to the 360th squadron of the 303rd bomb Grp (H)

with a brand new B-17G named Iza Vailable Too. Don, Bob, Ralph and I were quartered in a Quonset hut type of barracks with a capacity of about 20 officers. The enlisted men were at a different area of the airfield. I was fortunate to get the cot next to the door. The remaining weeks in March 1944 were spent in familiarizing ourselves with the officers club, briefing rooms and navigational aids. Our crew went on a orientation flight to see the base from the air. Being an old country the English maps were very precise and accurate. They had the nearby church, village and even the shapes of wooded areas located, so it made it easy to orient yourself coming in from a mission. Finally the day arrived, Easter Sunday, April 9, 1944, our first combat mission. We were awakened about 3am, breakfast about 3:30 am briefing about 4am, takeoff about 5am. Our target for the day was Focke Wolf Aircraft factory and airdrome at Marienburg, East Prussia, Germany

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The briefing consisted of the mission’s leader or other high ranking officer on a stage with a sheet covered board. When the sheet was removed it revealed the route to the target. Pins and yarn marked the route over the North Sea, across Denmark, over the Baltic Sea, and then inland to the target at Marienburg. The intelligence officer would follow and describe the target, and probable flak position along the way. The usual procedure after briefing was to attend the chaplain’s short prayer service, climb into trucks that take you to the hardstand, climb into wool lined pants, jacket, boots, and helmet. After all that you finished with putting on your Mae West life jacket and parachute harness. Once we climbed aboard we all had our duties to prepare for takeoff. I had my briefcase with flight log and maps. Since this was our first mission, my duty was to know where we were at all times so that if we had to abort, I would be able to direct the pilot back to base. Don and Bob got the signal to start engines and then taxied to takeoff lineup on the main runway.

When the green flare was shot off from the operations building, the lead B-17 rolled down the runway and each 30 seconds another B-17 rolled, forty in all. On B-17 Spirit of Flak Wolf, 427BS crashed shortly after takeoff about 2 ½

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Miles from the end of the runway. Because of its heavy gas and bomb load, it could not gain sufficient attitude and hit a tree while taking off. Its tail part of the stabilizer tore off. Still unable to gain altitude and hard to control, it hit another tree and crashed, catching fire on mile south of Winwick. Of the ten man crew, six were killed and four survived that were in the rear of the plane that broke off. After getting together the 303rd headed our over the Wash, the North Sea, Denmark. Ralph opened bob bay doors at the IP (initial point) for the short bomb run. Being very curious on the first mission, I looked out my window and saw the group ahead of us place their bombs right on target. You could see the flashes of the bombs as they hit the target. Our group

followed right behind and dropped bombs squarely on target. After we left the area, you could see smoke billowing thousands of feet high. The trip back to base was uneventful. Debriefing said

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Only 5 to 10 enemy aircraft were spotted over the Danish peninsula and in the target area. We had one distinction on our first mission, as we logged the longest time, 11 hours, 38 minutes.

Several aircraft landed at alternate airfields to refuel before returning to Molesworth. That number mission was 132. Our second mission was two days later to Sorau, Germany, a FW-190 assembly factory. I don’t remember much about this mission except that it was also long – 10 hours, 38 minutes of flying. Our third mission was one I will never forget. On April 13, 1944 the target was the Kugelfischer Ball Bearing Works at Schweinfurt, Germany. This was to be the third mission to this target, the first was August 17, 1943, the second was October 14, 1943 – Black Thursday.

This a high priority target. Any war machine cannot run without ball bearings. The previous two missions there resulted in

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Over 100 8th Air Force B-17s and B-24s shot down with over 100 airmen killed, wounded, and missing in action. We all groaned at briefing when 8th Air Force commander General Jimmie Doolittle ordered bombing altitude at 19,000 ft. Being a very high priority target, fighter attacks and flax was expected to be intense. After takeoff and forming up, we assumed third position of the lead 360th squadron of the low 303rd BG of the 4 ICBW. The 384th BG of our wing was flying as the high group. Before we came to the IP (initial point) to start the bomb run, I happened to look out the window over my disk and saw what appeared to be firecrackers exploding around the 384th BG behind us. All of a sudden four or five B-17s fell out of formation and went down; one B-17 burning from wing tip to wing tip and nose to tail twirling like a leaf in October. At the same time a German fighter came through our formation and hit the number two plane right across from us. A 20mm

cannon shell shattered the plexiglass nose and struck bombardier Lt. Thomas Dello Buono in the chest of the flak vest he was wearing. Despite shrapnel wounds and frostbite he dropped his bombs in the groups pattern.

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He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the nations second highest award for heroism. He was the bombardier on Lt. Nelson O’Beirnes’ crew who had trained with us in the states. When we got on the bomb run I looked ahead to the target area and saw intense and accurate flak.

There were big black clouds of flak along with the customary 88mm grey clouds indicating the Jerries were using bigger guns. When you see those bursting shells at your altitude in front of you and you have to fly through that barrage, you hunker down and pray that its not your time. We made it this time but the 394BG ended up with only 4 B-17s joining our flight back to Molesworth. They had sustained about 16 B-17s shot down from flak and fighter attacks. The 8th AF lost over

60 planes that day, over 600 airmen in eight or nine hours flight time. Our group lost on eB-17 from the 358th squadron and later learned all ten

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crewmen bailed out with nine becoming POW (Prisoners of War) and one evaded capture. At debriefing the Red Cross girls were waiting to give us the usual coffee and doughnuts. I think there was a little extra shot of whiskey handed out at the bar because of the severity of the mission. The cooks even served us steaks for dinner that evening only because it was such a tough mission. I know I was shaken somewhat by what transpired that day. On April 18, 1944 we bombed Oranienburg, Germany. On April 20, we bombed Sattevast in the Brest Peninsula of France. This mission I remember well. Our target was V-1 rocket sites aimed at London. Our heading on the bomb run was west to east and unfortunately we ran into high headwinds. It seemed as though we were standing still over the target. Needless to say we got the hell shot at us. We carried 1000 lb bombs to penetrate the concrete bunkers protecting the sites. Two days later we bombed Germany’s largest rail yards at Hamm. The Jerries recuperative powers were great because they could round up

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And force many prisoners or DPs (displaced persons) to restore the yards to accepting trains in a few days. Hamm was a favorite target because it served the heart of the industrial Ruhr Valley. Two days later, April 24, 1944 was a very memorable mission to Oberpofhafen near Munich. Our crew in Iza Vailable II were assigned to seventh position of the low squadron which was well known as purple heart corner because Jerry fighters took special delight in picking off tail end charlies. About halfway to the target, all of a sudden as I looked out of the window above my navigator’s table, a lone ME-109 dropped from above at 10 o’clock high. He was tan with a shade of green here and there like camouflage coloring the Jerries used in the African campaign. When he dropped down to not quite our altitude, he raced ahead for 100 or 150 yards. No sooner than when I spotted him, I called him out to Don. I cocked

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My gun above my table and started firing. With limited practice firing a 50 cal. gun I tried to lead him but was unsuccessful because everything was happening so fast. The Jerry raced ahead and all of a sudden he winged over and came at us at 10 o’clock. At this point he started firing his 20mm cannon shells at us as Don hauled back on the stick. The plane rose suddenly, ball turret operator Paul Pesetsky reported the cannon shells exploded below us, and I was thrown to the floor with my gun pointed up and firing with my finger still on the trigger. Don stated later that the

fighter had come so close as he passed by, he could clearly see the pilot. If Don had not pulled back, cannon shells would have exploded on Ralph and me and maybe Don and Bob. This ME- 109 pilot might have been the same one that tried to attack us later on and Paul claimed he shot him down. As we neared Munich we could see the beautiful snow covered Alps to the south and wondered if we were badly shot up could we make it to neutral Switzerland and sit out the rest of the war. We lost Paul Stewart and his crew on this mission. He was the one I flew with on one mission at Dyersburg.

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I don’t remember the exact toll killed or POW but I know Paul and his co-pilot Don Heape and navigator Paul Moller were killed. Don Heape was a real red neck from South Carolina and Paul Moller graduated from navigation school with me. On April 29, out mission was to big B. Berlin itself. It was the first of four to Hitler’s capital. There was a lot of apprehension and anticipation on the way. It turned out that there was a lot of flak over that big city but was not concentrated and we didn’t have any fighter attacks. On April 30, our mission was to Lyon, France to bomb .

May 5, 1944 was my 21st birthday—I supposedly became a man. I don’t remember what I did to

celebrate; maybe went to the officer’s club to have a coke. I do remember one time I went to the club and mixed good

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Scotch whiskey with English coke. When I got back to the barracks and layed down on my cot, I had the sensation of spinning around. As my cot was next to the door I fell out of bed and crawled outside and threw-up. On May 7, 1944 our second mission to Berlin was one I’ll always remember. Nothing unusual happened other than a lot of flak over the city and average flak we had fly through on the way back to base. As we approached the runway at 200ft, number 4 engine trailed fire all the way back to the tail. If we had had any elevation over the field I’m sure Don would have ordered us to bail out. Don did a good job by bringing us in and ground looping the plane off the runway because there were planes coming in behind us. No sooner did he cut the motors we all got out in record time for fear of explosion. In fact, I had the escape hatch open while we were rolling along the runway, but engineer Barnum held me back. When the plane finally came to rest off the runway, Don cut the engines and escaped out his window. The rest of us scrambled out the hatches and doors, and stopped a short distance away; turned around to see

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If the plane was going to explode. The fire died down when the props stopped turning at the same time the base fire fighters jumped on the wing to extinguished the flames. They did their job without hesitating. Unfortunately, that was to be Iza Vailable IIs ninth and last mission. Evidently the engineering department needed spare parts so they chopped our plane. This left our crew using several different planes to finish their tours. Group mission No. 148 on May 8, was to Sottevast, France to bomb V-1 bomb sites. This target was on the Brest peninsula of France, not a long flight and classified as a milk run. When we came around the channel islands and turned on the IP for our bomb run, we ran into a stiff headwind. It seemed as if we were standing still and an eternity with heavy flak

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Coming at us. Luckily we made it. On the way back to base we passed over Southhampton and noticed what seemed to be floating large railroad freightcars. These later turned out to be concrete floating docks used on D-Day. They were floated across the channel on D-day and sunk to form docks so ships could bring in supplies for the troops. Also on the way back we passed over Windsor Castle. The next mission (No. 151) on May 11 to Saarbrucken, Germany was worse in

many aspects. We didn’t take off until afternoon and command gave us an old B-17E instead of the customary B-17-G to fly. The target was a vast railroad network serving industrial Ruhr valley which is the heart of the German war machine. We turned at the I.P. and started our bomb run through very heavy flak. We ended by not dropping our bombs because group bombardier couldn’t see the target for late afternoon haze and smoke blowing down from the Ruhr. The

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Group made a 180 degree turn and came back without changing altitude into that horrendous anti- aircraft fire. We were flying alongside Captain Johnny Long who was on his 25th and last compulsory mission. One of our waist gunners saw his plane get a direct hit and go down. Johnny was killed along with several of his crew. I always remembered him because he slept at the far end of our barracks and he had a nude picture of a beautiful gal at his bedside. We finally went through hell again to drop our bombs and got back to base near dark. The next day when the planes were inspected every one had flak damage. Group mission (No. 152 my 14th) May 12, the

day after Saarbrucken to Merseberg, Germany to bomb the giant oil refineries there. This mission was a deep penetration into Germany so we

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had to expect fighter attacks along the way. Along with Schweinfurt, Merseburg was a very high priority target. I believe this was the first bombing of this target. We did not have any trouble in or out because of the excellent fighter support of our P47s short range and P51s long range. The P- 51 was the greatest fighter of World War II. They could fly all the way to Merseburg with their belly tanks, support us in the target area and get back to base. After our successful bombing, Merseburg became a favorite target because the Germans had remarkable effort in repairing their industries with slave labor. Karl Ulrich, a Elston High 1941 fellow graduate was killed on

November 22, 1944 Merseberg. He was a bombardier in the 358th or 359th squadron in our 303rd

Bomb Group. I was back in the states when he was killed and had always heard after the war that he was killed as a gunner, not knowing all along he was a member of my bomb group.

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Group missions (Nos 155 and 159) on May 19 and May 24 respectively to Berlin were routine because of scattered flak over the city and excellent fighter support to and from the target areas in town. Of my four mission to bomb Berlin, there was one incident I recall. As we were approaching the target area of the city with bomb by doors open and preparing to drop on the lead bombardier’s “bombs away”, Ralph Sudderth our bombardier was leaning back on his seat in from of me to kick the switch to drop bombs in train (one after another). All of a sudden he fell off his seat and onto me. While he was on me the lead plane’s bombs went away and the group started to turn away. I figured there was not time to let the bombs go in train so I reached over and kicked the salvo switch. Letting two and a half tons of bombs drop all at once makes the plane

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Jump very quickly. Don had to react fast to keep us from colliding with another plane in our squadron. I always wondered what damage I did or how many people I killed, maybe women and children, because those five five-hundred pound bombs dropping in one spot was like a blockbuster. Only God knows. Group missions 161, 163, 165 on May 27, May 28, and May 30 to Mannheim, Rotha, and Halberstadt respectively were all German cities with important industrial targets. On Group mission 168 on June 2 was to Juvisy, France. This was two days before D- Day. I don’t remember what the target was. It would be logical to say that we bombed an airfield,

bridge, or an important road junction behind proposed landing sites. The 8th and 9th Air Forces were attacking targets from Holland to Cherbourg, France to keep the Germans guessing as to

where the Allies would land. Hitler thought the attack would be at the Pod-de-Cale area, the shortest route.

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Group mission (No. 172) my 21st was D-Day the sixth of June 1944 to bomb Caen, France behind the beachhead. We awoke that early morning knowing that something big was about to be done.

We had been expecting it for days. There was extreme excitement at the briefing when

Colonel stated the big day that we had been waiting for had finally come and we were going to strike Hitler hard. Going out to our plane we passed manned gun positions, which hadn’t been manned before. I believe there were three flights from our group that day. My flight took off with full bomb loads and landed with full bomb loads because there was cloud cover below us and Mickey (radar) system failed. This was the second time we landed with full load.

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Group mission (No 175) June 7 to Fleis/Norreau. We took off to bomb a supposedly German concentration of troops behind the beachhead. Since I had some Mickey (radar) training, I was second lead navigator for our Group. With cloud cover below us again and Mickey not being jammed by the Germans, I was able to follow the leader perfectly. According to my readings on Mickey, we were right on target through the clouds. Next day Group mission (No. 176) June 8 to Orleans, France. I don’t remember the specific target but was probably an airfield or important bridge. At this point I’d like to say some new crews that came just before D-Day and six weeks after that day got their thirty missions in without seeing any ME 109s or FW 190’s and only light flak. On the way back from Orleans we flew over the beachhead in cleared skies. To look down and see the thousand ships is a sight I’ll remember all my life. At the same time I had to realize that soldiers of all nationalities were fighting and dying against Hitler’s armies.

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Group mission (No 177) June 10, 1944 to Nantes, France was a turning point in my life. We took off at the usual early morning hour. I don’t recall if the target was submarine pens or an airfield. With no hostile action around us because of D-day I was in a sort of relaxing mood. Even after bomb bay doors opened on the bomb run. Our bombardier, Ralph Sudderth or “Sud” was the lead bombardier flying with General Trauks that day and I don’t recall the name of the toggelier in our plane. Over the target as bombs went away a blast below the nose kicked my left leg. I looked down and saw blood oozing out of my flying boot and running down the floor to the bulkhead by the pilot. I called Don the the intercom to

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Tell him I’d been hit. There never was any pain, only numbness. Don sent Barnum the engineer down to aid me. He gave a shot morphine and put a tourniquet on to stem the blood flow which was freezing on the floor at 26,000ft. at about 20 below zero. I don’t recall the toggelier doing anything. Maybe he was in shock at seeing all the blood. We had to ease up on the tourniquet about every 20 minutes so I’d have some blood in my veins. All this happened at about 8:20am. With the morphine kicking I was a pretty happy flier base to base. Some say I was trying to navigate on the way back to base. As we approached the field, Don fired off a red flare signaling wounded on board. This procedure gives the pilot priority landing right so ambulances can be waiting. I don’t recall if they took me out front hatch door or whatever. The last I remember was in the operating room with the doctors taking my boots and shoes cutting my pants. This all happened about 4:20 in the afternoon.

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I awoke sometime during the night at the station hospital to see a beautiful blond nurse next to my bed. I think I drifted back to sleep and awoke the next morning to finally realize I had a cast on my left leg up to my thigh. The doctor told me that they put out a call for rare AB blood donors and ended up with several willing persons. Some of the patients around me all had battle wounds.

One pilot across from me had a bad upper leg wound. One particular second lieutenant across from me was brought in from the D-day invasion. He was in the lead company of the 116th regiment of the 29th division, the spearhead division on Omaha Beach. He had been shot in the arm and had lost circulation. They kept putting his

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arm in hot and cold water trying to restore that circulation. The last I saw of him after several weeks his arm was turning black which probably resulted in amputation. In the bed on my right was a lieutenant of the 82nd paratroop division who got a battle commission in Italy and was in the D-day invasion. He had jumped with his men and his body landed in a tree but his parachute did not. The wind caught his chute and pulled him out of the tree and slammed him to the ground where his back was broken. His general came to visit one day and gave him his Purple Heart. I got a case of scabies while at this hospital. They wrongfully thought I had some venereal disease so they put Calamine lotion over me. It turned out it was just a case of bad bed linens. Don was

the only member of our crew to visit me. Most finished up their 30 missions around June 20. Ralph finished up later because he was a lead bombardier and didn’t fly as often.

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After several weeks laying in bed using bed pans and sulfa pills, the two doctors who operated on me decided to take my leg cast off to see the results of their work. When they started to use the cutter and peeling the bandages off, it felt as if they were ripping my leg off. When the cast was off they marveled at the beautiful job they had done. They described what they had done. Because gaseous gangrene had set in from the long interval from being wounded to being operated on (8 or 9 hrs) they had to lay open my leg to clean it out of all the debris of boot, shoe, and clothing. The fibula was shattered and the tibia was untouched. The doctors marveled at the beautiful skin graft job they

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Performed. They described to me how they had a little device that peeled the skin from my thigh and unrolled on my open wound. They prided themselves for the 100 percent take on the graft. When I finally looked down I realized how lucky I was that my left leg was still there. In olden days they would have cut the leg off. I have a scar for life one to two inches wide that starts below the ankle bone and ends just below the knee. They presented me with the piece of flak that did all the damage. They found it in my pants around my knee. It was about an inch long with sharp edges, so sharp you could shave with it. It had fuzz embedded in it from going through the flying boot. I thought I gave it my mother years ago but evidently it was lost when she moved several times after dad died. Its lying out there somewhere in this world knowing it almost killed one Milo Schultz.

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They gave me crutches to get around and that was great to get out of bed and hobble to the bathrooms. After a few more weeks, I started my long trip back to the states. The first stop was to the 1st General Hospital north of London at --------. I believe I arrived there on a Saturday and

Sunday morning I was awakened by a blast close by. A V-1 rocket had hit somewhere on the hospital grounds. All day long and into the night there was expectation of hearing that “putt putt” motorboat sound in the sky. Those V-1 rocket only flew about 1000-1500ft high so you could see

easily see them. But you only had about ten seconds to dive for cover after that motor cut off. It was nerve racking to lay in bed at night nearing that approaching motor suddenly shut off and bam!

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While at 1st General I witnessed part of history being made. In September 1944, the allies had the big “Monty” Mongomery gamble into Holland where by paratroops would seize bridges over the

Rhine river in Holland and hold them till ground troops caught up with them. The C-47s and G-47s pulling gliders started passing over the hospital early one morning and continued for hours. As depicted in the movie “One Bridge Too Far”, the operation was a total failure for the British paratroops at Arnhem, Holland. More weeks passed by and finally got notice that I was going to be part of a boatload of wounded returning to the states. They shipped us by train to Glasgow, Scotland where we boarded the hospital ship. This ship had to be okayed by the Germans through Swiss authorities. The boat was lit-up at night like a Christmas tree with strings of lights and a spotlight on a big red cross on the single funnel. I don’t remember the name.

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It took us about a week to cross the Atlantic. I can’t recall how many other officers I roomed with but I do recall the weather was a little rough at times. At the rear end of “aft” there was a section with shell shocked wounded that was well guarded. My whole life I was used to fresh water green of Lake Michigan or Fish Lake. When you get to the middle of the Atlantic Ocean and see the deep blue color you step back and wonder. We arrived in Charleston, South Carolina. Sometime in October 1944, about a year after graduating from Navigation School. What a year of history for me. Although I could walk with crutches, they forced me leave ship

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By stretcher. After several days in Charleston, I was shipped by train to Vaughn Hospital, the new addition to old Hines Hospital in Melrose Park. There I was put into rehab for a while until they noticed that I didn’t have proper foot movement and I was practically walking on my toes on my left leg. They operated by stretching the Achilles tendon so I would have at least a 90 degree position of my feet. This time I had a walking cast on my leg and could get around without crutches. After this cast came off they noticed that my toes had curled up so they cut the tendons and straighten them. They may have put another cast on but I don’t remember. More weeks of whirlpool put my leg in good shape so I could get around pretty good. They had a good recreation non com there. I don’t remember his name but he had made some records and was well known. He knew everybody.

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He arranged for us patients to see a Blackhawk hockey game and the famous musical Porky and Bess. I shook hands with many famous personalities of the period such as Eddie Cantor, Caesar Romero, and the greatest fighter, Jack Demmpsey—the Manosa Mauler. I bowled a 200 game with a walking cast on. I made it home once for Christmas before being sent to Fort Thomas, Kentucky, across the river from Cincinnati in the spring of 1945 for more rehab. While there a piece of bone worked out of my leg. It started as a pimple and protruded after a day or so. When it worked out a little farther, I went to the doctor and he pulled it out. It healed quickly after that.

The officers at Fort Thomas had a box seat at Crosley Field in Cincinnati where the Reds played baseball.

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I went there when the Cubs played. 1945 was the year the Cubs won the National League pennant. They beat the Reds every game in their season series but one and that one was lost in

the first game of a double header. The Cubs went on to lose to the Detroit Tigers in the World Series. I was sent back to Vaughn for a short time before being sent to Wright Patterson Air Force Base at Dayton, Ohio for separation from service. While there I applied for permanent officer retirement and went home to see Mom and Dad and brother Roger. While home I got a call from a Colonel at Wright Air Base ordering me to return at once to meet the retirement board. This happened to be on August 8, 1945 V-J day. I took the South Shore to Chicago and met the crowds of people filling the streets and celebrating. I celebrated by getting a roomette on the train back to Dayton. Looking at the full moon out that large roomette window caused me to reflect about the war being over and all the buddies I had lost in training and in combat.

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I met the retiring board at Wright Air Base and went back home to Michigan City to await the decision. In the meantime I received my discharge dated . During the month of August 1945, I didn’t do anything but gad about and meet my buddies who were getting on the point system. I gave deep thought to going back to Purdue. I had been to Purdue during one of my leaves. With a foot cast on I went to a sorority dance with my former roommate George Read. Remember George was the one who flunked his Air Corp physical and then joined the Navy V-12 program at Purdue. He got a free education and a commission when he graduated in 1946. The next day was the last time I saw George as he passed away recently somewhere in the southwest.

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I had waited a year to go to Purdue after high school so it was a tough semester and a half of studying before I joined the Air Corps. All the vets were going back under the GI Bill. I thought the world had passed by me and I didn’t think I could handle the studying again. So, another important milestone happened in my life.